

**Human Services Advisory Council
Minutes of January 9 and 11, 2007 Meetings**

January 9, 2007

HSAC Members: David Rogers, Leslie Gordon, Gail Gulliksen, Mary Beth Sefton, Hal Lippman (City Council Liaison)

Staff: Tennille Smith-Parker

Call to Order and Adoption of Agenda: The meeting was called to order by Chairman David Rogers at 7:02 p.m. The agenda was approved with the addition of a staff report following the public hearing portion of the meeting.

New Business

HSAC briefly reviewed the process for the Community Services Fund Public Hearing. Based on previously determined criteria, five of the ten applicants were asked to attend the public hearing. Each presenting group was given 5 minutes to present their proposal, followed by a 10 minute question/answer period with commissioners. As part of the review, commissioners made two suggestions for the grant process. First, HSAC requested that in the future applicants be asked to type the applications, as several members had difficulty reading a handwritten proposal. Secondly, HSAC suggested that applicants also be asked to provide sufficient copies of the applications for the committee. Tennille agreed to take these suggestions back and incorporate them in future CSF grant processes.

Tennille also brought to HSAC a suggestion from the City's Chief Financial Officer, John Touhy. Mr. Touhy suggests that independent audits of the grant recipients should be conducted; these audits would cost approximately three- to five-thousand dollars. HSAC members were interested in this suggestion, but noted that some of the grant applicants may already be audited; this would be a useful piece of information to include in future applications.

Public Hearing

Falls Church Community Services Council - Beth McCarthy

The Falls Church Community Services Council (FCS) is an ecumenical group that provides a variety of services to those in need. Clients are referred to FCS by area social workers or pastors. FCS has applied for \$10,100 to support three of their programs: The furniture program, a clothing voucher program, and a transportation voucher program. The FCS furniture program collects donated items such as beds and sofas, stores them temporarily, and delivers them to clients as needed. Requested funds for the furniture program will be used for truck maintenance. For the other two programs (the clothing voucher and transportation voucher programs), FCS is seeking funds to purchase vouchers at area thrift stores to be used for clothing purchases, and Metrobus and Metrorail passes to be given to clients as needed.

In response to questions from HSAC, Ms. McCarthy noted that the FCS provides one-time assistance to referred individuals. The services are provided out of the volunteers' homes. An

administrative assistant was recently hired to support FCS with clerical tasks, including creating a newsletter and website, as well as recruiting volunteers.

HSAC was interested in how many FCS volunteers are City residents; Ms. McCarthy agreed to find out and forward that information to the committee.

Friends of the Falls Church Emergency Winter Shelter - Ron Brousseau

The Fall Church Emergency Winter Shelter operates as an overflow facility providing beds and other services to homeless individuals from December through March, and is applying for \$17,000. The requested funds will be used to renovate the food serving area and for personnel costs. Mr. Brousseau reported that the recent point in time survey found a gap of 104 beds in the area. He reminded HSAC that the shelter is part of the northern Virginia continuum of care, and is a priority in the City's strategic plan. The shelter has a history of good service and has a very strong volunteer base, with substantial in-kind donations. Last winter the shelter served 65 individuals for an average stay of 19 nights. This year the shelter has added health care to services being provided to clients. Mr. Brousseau invited HSAC members to visit the shelter and to attend a fundraiser that will be held at the State Theater on February 22nd.

In response to a question, HSAC reviewed with Mr. Brousseau the establishment of and process followed in administering the Community Service Fund.

In response to questions from HSAC, Mr. Brousseau stated that in past years, one dinner a week has been provided by a local restaurant; this year a second restaurant has started donating food as well. The Shelter is audited annually. A question was raised based on the satisfaction survey results reported in the application about clients feeling safe at the shelter; Mr. Brousseau noted that very rarely there are resident scuffles and an occasional robbery has occurred. Mr. Brousseau stated that if beds are available in permanent shelters, clients who have been at the shelter longest are referred to those centers.

Homestretch - Brenda Wilkes

Homestretch is a transitional housing program serving homeless families with children.

Homestretch has applied for \$20,000, which will be used to support six housing units in Falls Church. Ms. Wilkes reviewed services provided by Homestretch, such as a rent subsidy, life skills training, counseling, and ESL classes. Families are supported in the program for two years. She noted that Homestretch is seeing more victims of domestic violence.

In response to questions from HSAC, Ms. Wilkes stated that last year there were 76 families referred to Homestretch, and they have about 70 households in northern Virginia. If Homestretch does not have space for a family, they are referred to other shelter programs; some of these families come back to Homestretch for assistance again. Homestretch is audited annually.

Offender Aid and Restoration - Gail Arnall

Offender Aid and Restoration (OAR) is a community based organization that provides restorative support to offenders. OAR has asked for \$20,000 which will support three of their programs: Community service placement, an in-jail educational and instructional program, and a re-entry program. OAR is also establishing a faith-based mentoring program to help offenders reintegrate with family and the community. OAR has also established a subsidiary, a flower business, to generate additional income.

In response to questions from HSAC, Ms. Arnall stated that OAR is audited annually. She also stated that the “Living in a New Land” program is not being offered currently, but did note that OAR has an increased number of Spanish-speaking members on staff.

HOPE of Northern Virginia - Pat Holliday

HOPE is a crisis pregnancy center dedicated to meeting the needs of women/families facing unplanned pregnancies, and has requested \$900. These funds will be used to facilitate outreach efforts to City residents. Ms. Holliday described plans to place more advertisements in local media, as well as conducting outreach efforts to area churches, apartments, and even through the library. Currently, Ms. Holliday estimates that three of HOPE’s clients live in Falls Church. The director of HOPE is the only paid position; all other staff members are volunteers, and HOPE receives substantial in-kind donations.

In response to questions from HSAC, Ms. Holliday briefly described the intake process for new clients. Material needs are provided for, as well as emotional support and life skills training. Ms. Holliday stated that HOPE is not audited.

SUMMARY

In summary of the CSF grant process, HSAC members will score the applicants and deliver the scores to Tennille Smith-Parker before Thursday, January 11. Scores will be compiled and provided to HSAC at the next meeting. After hearing the applicants’ response concerning audits, HSAC determined that it is not necessary to require audits as a condition of receiving a grant, but that audit results should be included with the application.

Other Business

Staff Report: Tennille Smith Parker reported that the budget process is underway for FY 2007-08, with the goal of limiting any increase to 3% over the current year’s budget. The proposed H.H.S. budget will no longer include funding for the Housing Corporation or the General Manager’s Office; these two functions will become separate cost centers.

H.H.S. staff recently finished monitoring current grant recipients; all are in good standing. Staff would like better articulation/reporting of outcomes, and there continues to be confusion about what are City residences and what are greater Falls Church addresses.

Tennille also reported that the CIP was approved and includes funds for the affordable housing preservation initiative. Currently an assessment of affordable housing stock in the City is underway; an update will be presented to Council on January 16th. David Rogers asked to see the assessment data; Tennille will provide HSAC with any documents that are made available.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

January 11, 2007

HSAC Members: David Rogers, Leslie Gordon, Gail Gulliksen, Mary Beth Sefton

Staff: Tennille Smith-Parker

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:15 p.m. by Chair David Rogers.

Review of Community Service Fund Grant Applications: HSAC members individually scored each CSF grant application and recommended either a funding amount or a funding range. These recommendations were given to staff, who compiled them in a spreadsheet to be used as the basis for this discussion. Scores were totaled, and then scores and recommended funding amounts were averaged to guide the decision-making.

Tennille Smith-Parker reminded HSAC that \$83,000.00 has been budgeted for the FY08 Community Services Fund. The total amount requested by all applicants was \$89,526; HSAC's recommendations were averaged and that total came to \$84,848.75. Considering these figures, HSAC discussed options for their recommendation to Council. All members agreed that the applicants all presented reasonable and satisfactory requests, and it was noted that all of the applicant organizations have made good efforts to comply with requirements as recipients of past grant funding. HSAC confirmed that, while a scores is assigned to each application as a part of this review process, many other factors are also taken into account before recommendations are made. These factors include, but are not limited to, past performance of the grantees, reporting practices, capacity of the organizations to deliver services, amount of funding requested, and past requests from these same organizations.

After reviewing all factors with due diligence, David Rogers moved that HSAC recommend, in keeping with budget constraints, that City Council fund the CSF applicants in the amounts listed in the table below, with the caveat that if an additional \$6,526 were found to be available, HSAC advocates fully funding all grant requests, to a total of \$89,526. The motion was seconded by Leslie Gordon and passed unanimously.

Organization	Total Points	Recommended Funding
CADRE	291	\$2,900.00
Child Development Center	341	\$4,800.00
Falls Church Community Services Council	333	\$10,100.00
Falls Church Emergency Shelter	330	\$16,000.00
Health Services Agency of Northern Virginia	317	\$1,600.00
Homestretch	340	\$17,400.00
HOPE of Northern Virginia	309	\$824.00
Legal Services of Northern Virginia	334	\$11,466.00
Offender Aid and Restoration	327	\$17,250.00
Washington EAR	333	\$660.00
TOTAL RECOMMENDATION:		\$83,000.00

Other Business:

Tennille Smith-Parker asked HSAC to consider inviting the chairs of the Housing Commission and the Senior Citizens Commission to a future meeting to discuss issues of solvency and perhaps consider consolidation of the commissions. Both of these groups have had difficulty maintaining their membership. HSAC agreed to invite the chairs to a future meeting. It was noted that Council is planning a round-table session with the chairs of all advisory groups, so the proposed meeting with chairs will be scheduled after that event.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

The next meeting will be February 15, 2007.